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## **Delaware Thoroughbred Commission votes to ban Anabolic and Androgenic Steroids for use in race horses**

Yesterday, John F. Wayne, Thoroughbred Racing Commission Executive Director, reported to the Delaware Secretary of Agriculture, Michael T. Scuse, that the Delaware Thoroughbred Commission adopted rules banning the use of Anabolic and Androgenic Steroids in racing thoroughbreds at a public hearing held on March 11, 2008. According to Wayne, the ban will go into effect on April 19, 2008, the date that live racing resumes at Delaware Park for 2008.

During the public hearing, the Commission accepted verbal and written comment. After hearing the testimony and reviewing the written comments, the Commission unanimously adopted the rules for implementation. On adoption, Bernard J. Daney, Commission Chairman stated "We are going to have a grace period which will be from April 19 through July 16, 2008. During that time, if a horse tests positive for prohibited steroids, the horse will be sidelined until it tests clear before it is allowed to race again. Furthermore, the trainer of the positive horse will be assessed a fine of \$500.00 and will be responsible for the cost of the subsequent drug test. Any second offenses committed during the grace period involving the same horse will meet with a 90 day suspension, \$2,500.00 fine, loss of purse, and further ban of the horse from future competition until testing clear."

According to the Commission, after the grace period has expired, horses testing positive for Anabolic and Androgenic Steroids from July 19 through the end of the racing season, on November 11, 2008, will face an initial penalty of a \$1,000.00 fine, a 45 day suspension of the trainer, loss of purse, and the horse will be placed on the Stewards' list. A second offense will mean an increase in the fine to \$2,500.00, a suspension of 90 days, loss of purse, and further racing sanctions prohibiting the horse from future racing events until it tests clear. Those that find themselves violating the rule for a third time will face license revocation and loss of purse. Chairman Daney said, "I hope that horsemen will be aware that these substances are banned and will avoid being penalized by complying with the rules and will do what is in the best interests of the horse."

John F. Wayne commented, "Although Delaware did not spearhead this issue, we were close to the lead following neighboring Pennsylvania in prohibiting the steroids. With all of the information that has been available to the public about the use of anabolic steroids in major league baseball, football, the Olympics, and other sports, professional and amateur, the time was long overdue for elimination of these substances from racing competition." Wayne continued, "Pennsylvania's Chairman, Richard Abbott was at the Delaware meeting affirming their commitment to stay the course on the ban. Virginia is moving forward and New Jersey is expected to be coming on board by the summer."